

UFO POTPOURRI

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Mysterious Light Smashes Into Plane, Vanishes

The following article was released by the Associated Press in Springfield, Illinois, on July 30, 1950. It appeared on page 2 in the *DECATUR HERALD*, Decatur, Illinois, on Monday, July 31, 1950. Anyone having additional information about the incident is requested to contact John Schuessler at the address given above.

"A new what-is-it which promises to make flying saucers old hat was reported seen Saturday night by a pilot and four other persons. Jim Graham, 35, said the thing bumped right into his plane with a blinding flash, but didn't even dent the craft."

"This thing looked like a blue streak about eight or 10 feet long and had a long tail of reddish-yellow flame," the pilot told a reporter. "I was at about 5,400 feet and saw this thing coming at me from about 100 feet above me. It hit my propeller in the brightest burst of flame I have ever seen, and then it was gone." He said "there was no sound and it didn't rock my plane."

"Graham, a pilot for Capital Aviation Co. of Springfield, said the collision took place west of Williamsville, about 10 miles north of Springfield, at about 10 p.m. Saturday."

"Four Springfield residents called the Illinois State Journal and said they had seen a mysterious streak in the sky. George Meikle of Springfield said it 'gave off an intense blue light.' Mrs. O.J. Kibele of Springfield said "it was greenish like a traffic signal, with a red tail."

"Graham said he believes a number of motorists on U.S. route 66 observed the strange streak, too. He said he noticed as he flew over the highway that a number of automobiles had stopped and their spotlights were focused into the sky."

Britons Believe In Extraterrestrial Life

BBC News reports that according to the popular science magazine *FOCUS*, 52.2% of the British people said alien life must exist in the universe somewhere. *FOCUS* editor Paul Simpson said: "Belief in alien life is no longer the preserve of the lunatic fringe. Many scientists now believe that given the rate at which we are discovering new planets, it is more likely that intelligent life exists elsewhere in the universe." Further, he said: "I think the view is that, at some point, we will get a radio signal that will prove there is intelligent life out there."

"The influence of the X-Files TV series is clearly evident in the poll with people deeply suspicious of the authorities. 80 percent said the government would not tell us if it knew alien life existed."

"The results of the survey also vary according to sex, age, region and social class. Women are slightly more skeptical than men. Only 43% of people in the northwest believe in aliens while 65% in the southwest and 58% in East Anglia do. Pensioners are the most likely group to insist there is no intelligent life out there."

Did Jackie Gleason See Dead Aliens?

According to a story in the *BUFFALO NEWS*, on Sunday, June 12, 1987, Jackie Gleason was fascinated with outer space. The text of the article is as follows:

"Gleason was an avowed believer in UFOs and, according to his ex-wife Beverly McKeltrick, he even got involved in some spaced-out exploits with his friend Richard Nixon.

Beverly was a 37-year-old divorcee with a great golf game when Jackie met her at a Miami country club. Their four-year marriage ended in 1974."

"In her unpublished biography of the funnyman entitled "The Great One," Beverly, Gleason's second spouse, describes a bizarre trip Jackie took with the then-president in 1973 to Homestead Air Force Base in Florida to see what she says were the bodies of four dead space aliens recovered by the Air Force. The aliens were supposedly embalmed and displayed on operating tables and classified as top secret material. Gleason and Nixon visited the base under extremely tight security, she says."

"Given the gravity of the matter and its universal implications for national security, it's hardly surprising that the TV star and the former president kept mum about it all these years."

The article also told how Gleason had accumulated one of the largest private libraries in the country, which he kept in his Florida home. I have heard this story debunked in past years, however, I have never seen any evidence of an in-depth investigation of the story. I don't expect any official release of Nixon papers on this subject, but Nixon also apparently had an interest in the subject and made noises about opening the files. I have seen no indication that any of the following field work has been done: 1) a review the contents of the Gleason private library; 2) interviews with the top 25 people involved with Gleason from 1973 until his death; 3) interviews with Gleason's drivers and pilots; 4) private interviews with Gleason's ex-wife; 5) an examination of his travel records for 1973; 6) interviews with his private physicians; and 7) an examination of where else he and Nixon visited during their friendship? Of course, this is just a beginning of a thorough examination of the possible evidence.

Optical Signals From ET

According to the January 29, 1999 issue of *SCIENCE* magazine, some astronomers believe that flashes of laser light – both optical and infrared – would be a better way for extraterrestrials to communicate than by radio signals. Although radio waves travel farther, lasers are clearly superior for direct, point-to-point interstellar communications out to ranges of several thousand light-years. The Planetary Society has announced private funding for three new, low-cost "optical SETI" initiatives.

Space Shuttle Launches to the Space Station

NASA has announced launches carrying supplies and cargo to the Space Station in 1999.

- Flight 2A.1 – May 1999. Launch vehicle: U.S. Space Shuttle STS-96. Carries internal logistics and re-supply cargo for station outfitting and an external Russian cargo crane.
- Flight 1R – July 1999. Launch vehicle: Russian Proton rocket. Carries the Russian Service Module that will serve as the space station living quarters.
- Flight 2A.2 – August 1999. Launch vehicle: U.S. Space Shuttle STS-101. Carries internal logistics and re-supply cargo for station outfitting.
- Flight 3A – October 1999. Launch vehicle: U.S. Space Shuttle STS-92. Carries Ku-band communication system, control moment gyros for attitude control, and a Shuttle docking port.
- Flight 4A – December 1999. Launch vehicle: U.S. Space Shuttle STS-97. Carries first U.S. solar power arrays and batteries and two thermal control system radiators.

All the launches are dependent upon Russia meeting their commitment to be ready to launch their Service Module in July.

Some Useful Web Sites

<http://hyperion.advanced.org/20174/>

<http://www.onelook.com>

<http://www.stsci.edu>

<http://solar.rtd.utk.edu/~nwade/spaceflt.htm>

The Aviation Science of Flight

On-line glossaries

Space Telescope Science Institute

Encyclopedia of Information on Space flight